

E

207

T5A2



MATTHEW THORNTON



Class E 207
Book T5A2

OFFICIAL DONATION.



THE THORNTON MONUMENT.

ADDRESSES

AT THE

DEDICATION OF THE MONUMENT

ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF

MATTHEW THORNTON

AT

MERRIMACK, N. H.

SEPTEMBER 29, 1892.



Published by Authority of the State

CONCORD, N. H.
THE REPUBLICAN PRESS ASSOCIATION
1894

E 207
TEA2

D. OF D.
APR 3 11908

11908

THE THORNTON MONUMENT.

Within the narrow enclosure of a diminutive burial-ground in the village of Thornton's Ferry, in the town of Merrimack, for over four score years have reposed the remains of Matthew Thornton. Only a modest tombstone with a simple inscription has marked the resting-place of one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and one of the foremost promoters of the American cause. The patriots of the Revolution are not forgotten. The perpetuation of their memory in history and in enduring inscriptions is the willing duty of a grateful people.

The first suggestion of a monument to the memory of Matthew Thornton, if long delayed, found prompt expression in action. By an act of the legislature, approved August 28, 1885, the governor and council were authorized to erect a suitable monument upon a site selected and donated by the town of Merrimack. A disagreement between the authorities of the state and the town for a short time delayed, but was not allowed to prevent, an early consummation of a patriotic impulse of the people. A location for the proposed monument was accepted by an act of the legislature, approved

April 11, 1891. Without delay Governor Tuttle appointed Councillors Ramsdell, Quinby, and Farrington to represent the state in the prosecution of the work. A contract for the construction of the monument was made with the New England Granite Works of Concord, and comprehensive arrangements for the dedicatory ceremonies were promptly consummated.

The monument, of artistic design, is of finely hammered Concord granite. The base is six and one half feet square, and the full height is thirteen feet. The die, five and one half feet in height, is three and two twelfths feet square at the base and two and ten twelfths feet square at the top, and bears on the front face the following inscription:

IN MEMORY OF
MATTHEW THORNTON
ONE OF THE SIGNERS OF THE
DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE
ERECTED BY THE STATE OF
NEW HAMPSHIRE UPON A LOT
AND FOUNDATION PRESENTED
BY THE TOWN OF MERRIMACK

The following account of the proceedings of the day, reflecting credit upon the governor and council and upon the town committee immediately in charge of the many details of the occasion, will best introduce the actors of the day, and make known with what care and forethought all the arrangements had been made.

DEDICATORY CEREMONIES.

The day designated for the ceremonies was clear and pleasant. The air, tempered at once by the genial warmth of departed summer and the invigorating coolness of early autumn, vouchsafed to all a comfortable enjoyment of the out-door exercises. At an early hour of the day the grounds were rapidly filling with the assembling guests from Merrimack and the surrounding towns. Upon the arrival of the governor and council and other representatives of the state government, they were escorted by the veterans of the James S. Thornton Post, G. A. R., to the Thornton mansion, owned and occupied by Dr. James B. Greeley, where they were hospitably received by Mrs. Greeley and other descendants of Matthew Thornton.

The following great-grandchildren of Matthew Thornton were present on this most interesting occasion: Dr. James B. Greeley, Mrs. James B. Greeley, Mrs. Harriet A. Woodbury, Mrs. Frances E. Woodbury, Mrs. Hannah Thornton Fenn, Matthew T. Betton, Thornton Betton;—also the following representatives of the fifth generation: Mrs. H. A. Cutter, Mrs. E. H. Cutter, Gordon Woodbury, James Thornton Greeley, Guy H. Greeley.

A mammoth tent, erected upon the spacious lawn near the residence of Dr. Greeley, was filled to its utmost limit by an interested and attentive audience. Hon. William T. Parker, who had been invited to preside during the exercises, made a brief introductory address, and on account of feeble health introduced Dr. W. W. Pillsbury as president of the day. On assuming the chair, Dr. Pillsbury spoke as follows:

DR. PILLSBURY'S REMARKS.

Mr. Chairman of the Town Committee, Your Excellency the Governor and the Honorable Council of the State of New Hampshire, descendants of Matthew Thornton, Ladies and Gentlemen: The honor and duty as presiding officer on this memorable occasion were very properly tendered to our esteemed and well known fellow-citizen, the Hon. William T. Parker, to whom credit is due for this monument more than to any other citizen, and no one regrets more than myself that his state of health obliged him to decline the honor. And allow me to thank you, sir, for suggesting my name to his excellency the governor and his honorable council as your substitute. I feel it to be one of the proudest days of my life to be thus honored in being called to preside over this historic event.

We have met here to-day to make a chapter in our state and town histories in the dedicatory ceremonies of a monument erected by the state of New Hampshire upon a lot and foundation furnished by the town of Merrimack in memory of Matthew

Thornton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, the skilled physician, brave soldier, true statesman, upright judge, and "the honest man."

In behalf of the state of New Hampshire and the town of Merrimack I bid you all a cordial welcome to this historic town on the bank of the beautiful, busy Merrimack, which has been rightly called the "Rhine of America." As a citizen of Merrimack, and in behalf of its residents, I extend a special welcome to your excellency the chief executive, and to your honorable council, and to the descendants of Matthew Thornton.

This is the second time within the memory of some present, that a governor, while in office, has been present at a public gathering here, and I assure your excellency we feel honored.

In accordance with an old New England custom, and as no undertaking is properly begun without seeking Divine assistance, you will please give attention to the chaplain of the day, Rev. E. A. Keep.

Prayer was offered by Rev. E. A. Keep, of Merrimack.

The invocation was followed by the address of His Excellency Hiram A. Tuttle.

GOVERNOR TUTTLE'S ADDRESS.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen : We are here to-day to express our regard for Matthew Thornton by fitting words, and by dedicating to his memory an enduring monument.

As its chief executive, I accept in behalf of New Hampshire this memorial tribute to the distinguished patriot from the town of Merri-mack. I am also happy to express to those who have had this work in charge my grateful appreciation of the very able and acceptable manner with which they have executed their trust, and my full satisfaction with the faithful and harmonious completion of a patriotic purpose so worthy.

We know but little of the early life of Matthew Thornton. Born in Ireland, which has furnished so much muscle and brain for development, defence, and government in the United States ; brought to this country in infancy by his immigrant parents, who landed in Maine, changed their abode to Connecticut, and finally made their home in Massachusetts, where their son received an academic education and the usual training for the profession of medicine,—he began the real work of life with practically such ideas as native citizens of his time possessed. When young Dr. Thornton settled to practise medicine in our good old town of Londonderry, it was not by accident. He knew what he was doing. He was always thirsting for knowledge, and consequently was intelligent. He had learned that the settlers of Londonderry were from the north of Ireland, his native place,—a people after his own heart ; that they were industrious, thrifty, provident, and honest, and that they were consequently able and willing to pay their bills—very important factors in the outlook of a young physician seeking a location. Dr. Thornton's skilful relief of the sick, his engaging and instructive

conversation, his splendid presence, with a graceful dignity mellowed by charming humor and magnetic address, made him very popular with all classes, and a leader among the people of the several towns with whom he sustained intimate relations through his professional practice. He rapidly gained reputation and property. His more public life began when in a spirit of patriotic adventure he joined the expedition against Cape Breton as surgeon of the New Hampshire contingent of 500 men. Although the men performed great labor and encountered severe exposure and hardships, Surgeon Thornton managed so ably that but six men died before that strong fortress surrendered.

Dr. Thornton was appointed to honorable positions by the royal governors; but when the colonists were oppressed by the mother country, and hostilities had commenced at Lexington and Concord, he instinctively and promptly lined up with the people and took a bold and decided stand for their cause.

When the royal governor, John Wentworth, retired, in May, 1775, and the colonial government was dissolved, leaving New Hampshire in a condition of anarchy, Dr. Thornton became president of a convention to devise a government for the people. This action he was probably aware might be construed as treason, the penalty for which at that time differed greatly from that of the United States during the past thirty years: it was sure and ignominious death. As Dr. Thornton was executive officer of this convention, the only government in New Hampshire for a time, he was

really its first chief executive chosen by the people or their delegates. Under the constitution formed by this convention he was chosen speaker of the assembly and councillor to President Weare. He was chairman of the committee of safety, and also chairman of its sub-committee. On September 12, 1776, he was chosen a delegate from New Hampshire to the colonial congress, and took his seat in that body November 4. Immediately claiming his right, he affixed his name to the Declaration of Independence, which had been signed by most of the members in August before his election. He was not required to do this. It placed his life in greater peril, had the colonial cause proved unsuccessful. But it was this act more than all other acts in the long and useful life of Thornton, that brought this concourse here to-day to honor his memory.

He performed many and valuable services, and made great sacrifices for the liberty and independence of the colonies,—and so did John Langdon, Meshech Weare, John Sullivan, and many others; but as the signers of the Declaration of Independence, Josiah Bartlett, William Whipple, and Matthew Thornton gained a higher and more lasting distinction than other New Hampshire patriots in the Revolution. They did better than they knew: they became a part of the illustrious fifty-six whose names will be preserved and cherished with our great charter of freedom.

Rufus Choate, in one of his impassioned rhetorical flights, characterized the Declaration of Independence as “a string of glittering generalities.” Ages

upon ages after Rufus Choate and his marvellous oratory are lost in oblivion, the Declaration of Independence will be borne onward and onward by the tide of time, and read with admiration and wonder by the wise and good, the lovers of freedom, and the friends of all mankind.

Dr. Pillsbury, in a brief and appropriate address, introduced Hon. Charles H. Burns, of Wilton, the orator of the day.

ADDRESS OF HON. CHARLES H. BURNS.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: In the events of the world which have been preserved from oblivion, the acts and characters of distinguished persons form the staple of chief attraction. Remove from the pages of ancient and modern history and literature all personal account of the mighty minds that have dominated the conduct, moulded the will, and directed the thought of the age in which they lived, and much of the piquancy, force, romance, and interest that now enchain the student would disappear.

Aristides, whose character is venerated for its uprightness; Pericles, suggestive of the literature and oratory of Athens; Caesar, the glory of Rome, and the most eloquent of orators before the Saviour; Alexander the Great, with imperial powers, matchless in combined and effective force, arrayed against and conquering all mankind as enemies who did not choose tamely to submit to his tyranny; Hannibal, the mightiest general of antiquity; Alfred the Great, under whose powerful

and intelligent direction England became the source of influences that extended over all Christendom; Milton, one of the ablest and noblest of the world's great poets; Richelieu, Cromwell, and Nelson, Frederick the Great, Bonaparte, and Wellington, Elizabeth, and Mary Queen of Scots,—these, as well as Burke and Mirabeau, Fox and Talleyrand, Knox and Luther, Bacon, Bunyan, and Shakespeare, and many other imperial minds, are the great facts of history that touch the hearts, engage the memories, challenge the admiration, or arouse the contempt of all mankind.

But there is a roll of honor dearer to the American heart, than any line of self-constituted monarchs, or any array of mental giants, whose arena of action has been on other soil, and who are accounted the great teachers and leaders of the world, however brilliant their poetry and eloquence, or convincing their logic and philosophy, or admirable their boldness and heroism. In the century of our national life there have appeared in the forefront, and who have been crowned by the universal verdict of mankind, scores of grand men. In startling deeds, in unbridled and tyrannical will, in daring and merciless ambition, they may not have been the equals of the intellectual giants who are regarded as the great captains of Christendom; but in homely virtues, in sturdy common-sense, in deep and powerful conviction, in unflagging integrity and courage, and in abiding and conscientious patriotism, they have never been surpassed by any rulers on earth. With what pride and satisfaction we recall the names of those who have

been thus exalted by the common consent of their countrymen. Sufficient time has elapsed since most of them passed away to secure for them an impartial and accurate estimate.

In the famous galaxy of American statesmen and heroes, men of immovable principles and unsullied honor, there are some of the most eminent men appearing in the world for a hundred years—men who deserve the most from their fellow-men. Tennyson, England's great poet, has written that we are "the heirs of all the ages;" but in all of our inheritance of all the ages, among the most precious of God's priceless gifts to the American people are the deeds, the examples, and the fame of the noble sons of this great nation.

But it is not of the beacon-lights of history that penetrate the dimness of "slow-paced centuries," nor of the men whose eminence is peculiarly national, that I am to speak to-day, but of one who greatly honored our state in a trying epoch of her history, and whose memory is fragrant with the perfume of many noble deeds.

The soil, climate, and government of New Hampshire, from its earliest settlement, have conspired to furnish a splendid arena for making completely developed men and women. Physically, mentally, and morally, her sons and daughters have ever been distinguished for being solidly equipped, rigidly disciplined, courageous, earnest, ready and able to meet and adapt themselves to any and all circumstances. With a history full of romance and war, she has always found within her territorial limits men who were sufficiently strong and willing

to defend and protect her from all assaults, while the nation never called upon her in vain for assistance.

In every crucial struggle of the republic, whether civil or military, legal or legislative, moral or constitutional, New Hampshire has been a master force. Her sons, impelled by a patriotism that has never flagged, signed the immortal Declaration of Independence, were first among those who initiated the Revolution at Bunker Hill, were first and foremost at the decisive Battle of Bennington, entered into and helped form the American Union, stormed and captured the heights of Lundy's Lane, led in an attack upon human servitude that resulted in the emancipation of four millions of slaves, marched through Baltimore into the jaws of death at Bull Run, and fought till the end at Appomattox.

The world has never seen a more intelligent, loyal, patriotic, resolute race of men than have dominated the soil of New Hampshire since its abdication by the red man. Small in area, rough and grand in surface, with pure water, vital and health-inspiring air, and peopled with a sturdy race, she has furnished more than a just share of courage, character, brain, and heart to her country. Almost every page of her history reveals a striking and noble figure. Her mountain peaks, which tower far above the level of the sea, are not more numerous than her giant sons, whose forceful deeds and lives have been conspicuous at home and abroad.

On a beautiful spot in front of the state capitol at Concord there stand the bronze statues of three

great men, all noble sons of the Granite State. Stark, whose heroism was grandest when it was most needed, and whose sword was all-powerful in achieving the establishment of the commonwealth; Webster, whose great brain was the marvel of all Christendom, and whose conspicuous statesmanship made the nation his debtor; Hale, the great senator and magnetic leader in one of the most sublime movements of his age, whose dauntless courage and splendid powers carried terror to a brutal system of human slavery, and helped lead the way to the emancipation and freedom of millions of his fellow-men. As we behold these heroic figures, and recall to mind the splendid work of the grand men they represent, we marvel almost that their appearance has been so long delayed.

There is always a time following great civil and military victories when the work of distinguished leaders seems to be almost forgotten, so absorbed is the community in the glorious results which follow. But, as events accumulate and the world moves along, the just sense of the people turns, as by intuition, to the sublime and heroic conduct of those to whom they are indebted for the blessings they enjoy.

It is a curious fact that it requires a little distance in order to see the full and well rounded character of a great and good man. Washington, who has been in later years called "first in peace, first in war, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," was criticised and even traduced by some of his compatriots. The sainted and martyred Lincoln was denounced by many of his contemporaries; and

Grant, the mightiest general of our time, was taunted as intending to establish a despotism, instead of preserving the Republic. But who to-day dares question the nobility of the character of Washington, or the sweet purity and unsullied honor of Lincoln, or the sublime patriotism and matchless ability of Grant? Prejudice and political hypocrisy perish, while character and patriotism never die. Men in the end take the places to which they are justly entitled.

The Colonial and Revolutionary fathers did not escape the criticism and personal jealousies of their companions, but their patriotism was so noble, and their sacrifices for the republic were so great, that all else is eclipsed in the estimation of their descendants.

Matthew Thornton, the subject of our thoughts to-day, was a commanding character among strong men, in a great struggle for state and national independence. That his name and fame are but little known is only proof that his lot has been such as is common to all mankind. He was one of three distinguished New Hampshire patriots, whose work for more than a quarter of a century was of supreme importance to the state. Livermore, Weare, and Thornton were great leaders in a great cause.

It is not the purpose of this address to enter minutely into the details of his exceedingly useful and quite distinguished career. Only the leading events in his life may now be considered. The world takes but little note of the private affairs of mankind, but it delights to learn of those great

public deeds which are heroic and patriotic. It delights in contemplating the hero and the patriot. It is such who compose its idols. They are at once its exemplars, its pride, and its inspiration.

Matthew Thornton was born in Ireland in 1714. When but two years of age he was brought to this country by his father, James Thornton. He first settled in Maine, but soon removed to Worcester, Mass. He was educated in Massachusetts, and studied medicine. In 1840, when at the age of twenty-six, he settled in Londonderry and began the practice of his profession, and he was constantly engaged in practice from that time on for a period of thirty-nine years. But in the meantime he never neglected any opportunity to serve the people with whom he had identified himself, when duty required; and an examination into his career not only shows that he willingly and successfully performed every duty, however insignificant or important, with marked fidelity, but it also shows that he was eagerly pressed into public service, and for no other reason than that, in the estimation of his fellow-citizens, he was eminently fitted for the discharge of such duties.

Londonderry was then an important place in the colony. It was the largest and most populous place, with the exception of Portsmouth, in that jurisdiction, and it remained so for many years. It was so all through the Revolution and in the transition period from a colony to a state, during which Thornton gave much time and performed his most eminent public service.

It was here that one of the strongest and most

worthy races of men that ever settled on this continent had made their home. A race which had a rugged origin in Scotland, and which, in its movement toward America, settled and long dwelt in the north of Ireland. They came to this country with the noble purpose of becoming good citizens. They were possessed with the native integrity of the Scotchman, the firmness and devotion of the old Covenanter, the frugality and enterprise of the Saxon, the wit and cheerfulness, the loyalty and steadfastness, of the Irishman. They were sagacious, with great staying qualities. They were wise and fortunate in the selection of a locality in which to make a home. Admirable in climate, excellent in soil, propitious in opportunities for the formation of a just government, they found here the very spot, of all the world, the best adapted for the accomplishment of the purposes of their immigration. Their advent to these shores was quite as important to the state of New Hampshire and to the United States as to themselves. Indeed, it is not difficult to name scores of strong and mighty men who have figured in a marked degree in state and national history, whose origin can be directly traced to the blood of this Scotch-Irish race. Their strong wills, sterling integrity, unflagging determination, uncompromising honor, permeate every decisive movement that has ever been taken in the progress of the people, from a British colony living in the shadow of a throne, to the freest and noblest government that has ever adorned the family of nations. In this magnificent enterprise this valiant race has been a living, vital, and powerful factor.

Dr. Thornton, although his father located in Massachusetts, was of this same race, and it is altogether likely that in selecting a home and a theatre of action he was influenced very much by this fact; and in view of his eminent usefulness as a surgeon and physician—a profession which does so much for mankind, and which is one of the noblest of the great professions—as well as the conspicuous service which he rendered the commonwealth, his advent into Londonderry was a most fortunate circumstance.

The town then included a very large territory. Within its limits were Windham and Derry and parts of several other towns, and all this territory, as well as that embraced by the whole state, has a vital interest in this spot which contains the dust of Matthew Thornton. And it is indeed most fitting that the state of New Hampshire should erect, as it has, this beautiful granite shaft to mark the sacredness of the place made historic from the relics it contains of a patriotic and fearless character, which must ever form an interesting study in tracing the growth and development of an English colony, struggling under the oppression of British dictation, to a noble state, whose government is the majestic will of a free people.

To appreciate the life and work of Thornton, it is necessary to keep in mind the sacrifices that the leaders in the colonial struggles were obliged to make in espousing the cause of the people in their warfare against the crown. They became what the world called rebels. They were disobedient citizens. They defied law. They denounced their

rulers. They openly challenged the right and power of the king. They cast aside forever all chance of preferment under the royal government. They could no longer hope for the wealth that was acquired by the fortunate few. They subjected their all to confiscation and annihilation. But with a boldness and courage worthy of the noblest struggle for freedom and independence known to history, they organized assemblies, issued addresses to the people boldly and plainly warning them of their danger and exhorting them to united action, constituted committees of safety to execute the resolves of their chosen representatives in avowed opposition to and in defiance of the acts of the British parliament and British ministers, charging that government and its officers with subjugating the American colonies to the most abject slavery, pledging their honor, their estates, and their lives to the accomplishment of their disenthralment.

And it must also be borne in mind that this was not a rebellion against a weak and ephemeral government. They were not a set of wild adventurers, who, if defeated, would disappear from the rulers of nations. But it was treason to the most powerful kingdom on earth—a kingdom which had ruled and reigned for centuries, which was monarch of the land and mistress of the sea, and beneath whose tyrannical sceptre the people of the province of New Hampshire had been forced to bow for almost a hundred years. Defeat, for this giant government, meant only a withdrawal of its remorseless grip from the territory of its American colonies, leaving it still the possessor of the

wealthiest and most powerful of the world's great kingdoms, capable of annoying, if not destroying, any people who dared to dispute its supremacy.

All this was known to the heroes and patriots of the colonial struggles, as it was to those of the Revolution, and it serves to show of what mettle they were made. Thornton entered the struggle with manly courage. He early took his place among the foremost of those who demanded larger liberty for the people, and boldly resisted the encroachments of arbitrary power. He was active, energetic, enthusiastic, possessing great intelligence; and thus equipped, it is not strange that he became a recognized leader in all public matters.

In 1745 he was surgeon of the New Hampshire troops in the expedition against Cape Breton, performing his duties with marked fidelity. He was a member of the Assembly when it was organized in November, 1758. He was also a member in the years 1760 and 1761; and when the stamp act went into operation, November 1, 1765, Dr. Thornton, with scores of others, resisted it to the end. He was conspicuous in all town affairs. He was moderator of the annual town-meeting of Londonderry in 1770, 1771, and 1776. During a part of that time he was one of the selectmen of the town, thus showing that he did not disdain to take part in the minor affairs of the people with whom he lived.

He was a member of the first convention, whose members were regularly chosen in each town and parish in the province, and which was held at Exeter, May 17, 1775, to deliberate and act upon the condition of affairs. There were one hundred

and fifty-one members of this convention, and it was called the "First provincial congress." It selected Dr. Thornton as its president. It also chose a committee of safety, consisting of five members, of which he was made chairman. It adopted preambles and resolutions, voted instructions to its committee of safety, the whole constituting a substantial declaration of war against the British government, and it sent John Sullivan and Nathaniel Folsom delegates to the First Continental congress. The action of this assembly, together with the vigorous measures resorted to by the congress, rendered royal government in this province powerless, and compelled the last royal governor, John Wentworth, to retire for safety to the Isles of Shoals, where he performed the last act of his administration "by issuing a proclamation adjourning the general assembly of the province summoned by him, but which he could not control, and which never met again, and then left the province never to return; and royal government in New Hampshire came to an end after an existence of ninety-five years."

The committee of safety became at once the executive power. It raised and organized regiments, established a militia, assuming the attitude of armed rebellion, some of whom engaged in the battle at Bunker Hill. Dr. Thornton, being chairman of the committee of safety, was prominent, active, and conspicuous. The committee was in almost constant session during the remainder of the year 1775. During this period the committee and the Provincial congress were the gov-

ernment, and Thornton was the acknowledged leader of both.

By the recommendation of the Continental congress a convention was called, made up of representatives apportioned according to the population of the different towns, which met December 21, 1775. Matthew Thornton was chosen president of this convention. It selected a committee of five, of which Mr. Thornton was made chairman, to draft a formal constitution to report to congress. January 5, 1776, this report was presented to congress, and adopted by it "with but slight alterations." Congress, under the power conferred by this constitution, elected twelve councillors as an independent branch of the legislature, of whom Thornton was one. They were the advisers of the president in executive matters.

In January, 1776, Dr. Thornton was chosen by the legislature, as it was called under the constitution, an associate justice of the superior court of common pleas—an honor accorded him, not because he was a lawyer, but on account of his large intelligence and recognized integrity.

Both houses of the government of New Hampshire, in which Thornton was a commanding spirit, unanimously adopted a declaration which preceded and foreshadowed the immortal Declaration of Independence. In 1776 he was chosen a delegate to the Continental congress by the legislature for one year, and, although he did not become a member until after the Declaration of Independence had been made and executed, he was given permission, at his own request, to add his signature

to it. He knew that by signing that immortal paper he would secure immortal renown, and confer distinguished honor upon the sovereign state he so nobly represented. In December, 1776, he was again elected to the Continental congress for one year from January 23, 1777. He was a member of the committee of safety almost continuously from 1775 to 1777.

Although he held a commission as colonel under the constitution from Governor Wentworth, he was not in the service during the Revolutionary War. He held the office of associate justice until 1782, when he declined to serve further on account of the infirmities of age. He served in the state senate under the constitution of 1784, during that year, and also in 1785 and 1786.

Down to 1779, Dr. Thornton lived for the most part in Londonderry; he then moved to Exeter, but did not remain there long, as in 1789 he bought a large estate in this town of Merrimack, on the banks of its charming river, which is as beautiful as the Rhine, where, being at peace with all men and loyal to his Divine Master, he spent the remaining days of an honorable and eventful life. The property he acquired had been confiscated, because its former owner was a Tory. Its full and delightful enjoyment, by one whose distinguished services were a powerful factor in driving Toryism from the soil of New Hampshire, was a compensation richly and loyally earned by a true and noble patriot.

Here he lived for twenty years. He died while visiting his daughter at Newbury, Mass., June 24,

1803, at the age of 89 years. Here it was that he became attached to this soil, and a part of the history of this grand old town of Merrimack. Though well advanced in years when he became a citizen of his adopted home, he was active, energetic, and always devoted to the interests of his profession, his neighbors, and his town. He not only served frequently as selectman, but he was elected twice to the legislature. In whatever he engaged, he was able and faithful.

Blest in his home, as he deserved to be by his devotion to it, leaving an interesting family and many worthy descendants, among whom was a grand-son, a native of Merrimack, who bravely directed the thunders of the "Kearsarge" in its sublime action against a rebel privateer, thus adding new fame to an already great name, he fulfilled the measure of a well ordered and successful life.

This is but an epitome of the life and work of the noble man in whose honor and at whose grave we stand with uncovered heads to-day. The epitaph upon his tomb, "An honest man," is the verdict of history.

Fortunate indeed was the community where Matthew Thornton, with his rich experience, rare professional skill, ardent patriotism, mature judgment, and untarnished honor, spent the autumn and evening of his life. Such a career confers imperishable distinction upon the commonwealth. It is at once an inspiration and a model. It spurs to action and completeness. Living, he was a vital force, and dying

“in a green old age,
And looking like the oak, worn, but still steady
Amidst the elements,”

his memory is a valuable heritage, recalling one who displayed distinguished merit in a trying crisis, a man

“Of reason, valor, liberty, and virtue.”

During a brief intermission immediately succeeding General Burns's oration, a generous collation, prepared by the hospitable people of Merrimack, was served in an adjoining tent. In the afternoon the tented auditorium was again filled with an attentive and willing audience. The following pages contain all the addresses of which copies have been obtained.

At 2 o'clock the exercises were continued, the president introducing William W. Bailey, Esq., of Nashua. He spoke as follows:

ADDRESS OF W. W. BAILEY, ESQ.

I think it a matter of regret that the state of New Hampshire has heretofore done so little in the way of perpetuating the memory of her Revolutionary patriots by monuments and statues. Some forty years ago a very modest monument was erected by the state at Hampton Falls to the memory of Meshech Weare. A few years ago a fitting statue of General Stark was placed by it in the state-house yard at Concord. And now, almost ninety years after his death, the state has performed a grateful duty by erecting a well merited monument to

perpetuate the memory of Matthew Thornton. There are yet others who well deserve such honors. John Langdon, John Sullivan, and Alexander Scammel are distinguished names worthy of such honors.

Such memorials serve a useful purpose. They honor the dead and stimulate the patriotism of the living. They are evidences of appreciation of brave and patriotic services by a grateful people. Few persons now living have looked upon the face of a Revolutionary patriot. They have all long since passed away. Our knowledge and impressions of them and of their deeds are from history. There may be danger that lapse of time and subsequent important events in the history of our nation may tend to obscure the glory of their achievements, and to diminish that due sense of gratitude that ought to exist in the hearts of all succeeding generations as long as our nation shall endure. Monuments and statues illustrate, emphasize, and keep in remembrance great facts and characters in history. This monument will remind coming generations of the life, character, and public services of Matthew Thornton.

Doctor Thornton's age undoubtedly prevented his engaging in military service, as he was over sixty years of age at the time of the commencement of the Revolutionary War. He served his country as a civilian, and ranked with Meshech Weare, John Langdon, and Josiah Bartlett, his distinguished contemporaries in civil life. As a member and president of the first provincial congress of New Hampshire, as a member and chairman of the first

committee of safety, as a member and president of the convention called to meet in December, 1775, to establish a form of government for the colony of New Hampshire and as chairman of a committee appointed by it to draft a form of constitution, and as a signer of the Declaration of Independence, Doctor Thornton performed services, and displayed an ability and an exalted patriotism, which were of vital importance to his country in its extremity, and which entitled him to the lasting gratitude of his countrymen and to this monument. Of Scotch-Irish descent, a Presbyterian in sentiment, a patriot by nature and instinct, of mature age and large experience, he seems to have been specially fitted for a leader in that great emergency. He was an organizer and leader for the crisis. The fact that two of the most critical battles of the Revolution—the Battle of Bunker Hill and the Battle of Bennington—were fought largely by New Hampshire soldiers I think has heretofore been somewhat overlooked, and that for this New Hampshire has not claimed or received sufficient credit for herself.

On the 20th of May, 1775, the first provincial congress of New Hampshire voted to raise two thousand effective men for military service, and for paying for the expense of maintaining the same each member pledged his honor and estate in the name of his constituents. The committee of safety, of which Doctor Thornton was chairman, discharged the executive powers of the government, and under its supervision three regiments were raised and organized, two of which took part in the Battle of Bunker Hill, being a majority of the sol-

diers who were engaged in that battle on the side of the colonies.

In 1777, upon the reception of the news of the fall of Ticonderoga, a general feeling of discouragement and depression prevailed throughout the colony. The colonial legislature of New Hampshire was then in session, and John Langdon was speaker of the assembly. The morning after the reception of the news, John Langdon said to the assembly, "I have three thousand dollars in hard money; I pledge my plate for three thousand more; I have seventy hogsheads of Tobago rum which shall be sold for the most it will bring;—they are at the service of the colony. If we succeed in defending our firesides and our homes, I may be remunerated; if we do not, the property will be of no value to me."

This act and the spirit it infused enabled the colony to raise those regiments which Stark led to Bennington, and which were over seventy-two per cent. of the number of soldiers engaged in winning that important and decisive victory on the side of the colonies. New Hampshire has a right to claim a large share of the glory of those two battles, and to Doctor Thornton and John Langdon as civilians is due great credit for making those victories possible. We honor the memory of our Revolutionary ancestors because after seven long years of war they achieved national independence. We also honor their memory because they established a form of government based upon the principle that the intelligence, patriotism, and discriminating justice of the people are sufficient for self-government, and that

government is of the people, by the people, and for the people, a government which for more than a century has stood the test of time and been an example to all nations of the beneficial effects of a free government.

The French Revolution, occurring shortly after the close of our Revolutionary War, was produced by substantially the same influences working in the minds of the people, and had for its object the establishment of a government founded upon the rights of the people to self-government. Control of the Revolutionary movement fell into the hands of unprincipled, ambitious, and bloodthirsty men. In the name and under the pretence of liberty and a free government, gross crimes and atrocities were committed. By such excesses the way was prepared for the usurpation and career of Napoleon Bonaparte with its attendant wars and calamities, and the development of free government was checked for generations.

In striking contrast, the control of our Revolution fell into the hands of unselfish and patriotic men, wise and able statesmen. Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Hancock, Langdon, and Thornton are some of their familiar names. Through their efforts our nation was founded. The generations since have enjoyed the rights and privileges of a free government. Civil and religious liberty, national and individual prosperity, have been enjoyed to a greater extent than have heretofore been enjoyed by any nation. Lapse of time has confirmed its usefulness and strengthened it in the minds of the people. We to-day are in the full

and increasing enjoyment of its benefits and blessings.

Well may we all heartily join in the services of the dedication of this monument, erected as a token of remembrance of the life and services of Matthew Thornton.

Gen. Charles H. Bartlett, of Manchester, was then introduced.

ADDRESS OF GEN. CHARLES H. BARTLETT.

General Bartlett said,—

Mr. President: A celebrated philosopher, in ancient times, is said to have been asked by a friend why he did not have a statue erected in his honor, and answered that he had much rather people would inquire why he did not have a statue than why he did have one. If any one should hereafter ask why this enduring structure has been erected to honor the name and perpetuate the fame of Matthew Thornton, the question has been answered here by the orator of the day, answered as few men can answer it; and the story of the patriot's life has now been told, and so told, that henceforth it will have its place in the literature of the land, and the prominence to which it is justly entitled.

It has not been the fashion of our state to celebrate the achievements of her heroes and statesmen in bronze, granite, or marble, to any considerable extent. Individual liberality, and appreciation of departed greatness, for which we should be profoundly grateful, have given us the manly forms of

Webster and Hale for the contemplation and admiration of future generations, and the state has contributed the immortal Stark to the group, but the public treasury has not been greatly depleted by appropriations in this direction. No one inquires why these have been so honored, but the inquiry is why others have not, whose absence may well be cited as evidence of our want of appreciation and gratitude, where they ought to be marked and conspicuously responsive.

The actors in our recent struggle for the preservation of the Union have been liberally honored and celebrated in that patriotic literature common to all nations and races of men, which is read and understood, as by common instinct, by all beholders, is revered alike by Christian and barbarian, and whose indestructibility defies the elements and mocks the tireless tooth of time; but the actors in our earlier struggle for independence have not been so generously treated.

This volume which you to-day so appropriately dedicate, and from whose open page even the passer-by will learn the lesson of patriotism and love of country which it will forever inculcate, let us hope will be followed by another and another, until the story of all that noble band of heroes and patriots who made our Revolutionary era forever famous and forever glorious shall be told as Matthew Thornton's story has been told to-day, and their names, like his, are emblazoned to be read and honored by all who shall hereafter reap the blessings which will flow from the pure fountain of their patriotism and sacrifices, let us hope, forever.

Gordon Woodbury, Esq., of Manchester, spoke as follows:

ADDRESS OF GORDON WOODBURY, ESQ.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: There are two things which at the outset I suppose I ought to say, for they are usually expected of every man speaking on such an occasion. One is that the call upon me is wholly unexpected, and the other, that it gives me great pleasure to be here and to speak.

One of these statements would be entirely true in this case, and the other false. I am truly very glad to be here, and to speak, but I was warned in advance that I should be called upon. But I was not warned of the treat to which we have all listened with so much pleasure and profit; and until his claims were so ably set forth, I was really ignorant of how great a man Matthew Thornton was.

I have the honor to be numbered among his descendants; and of any claim to consideration which a man might put forward on the score of his ancestry, where is that which compares with the claim of descent from one who served his country in her hour of need?

We have all heard of a father or of a mother rising to plead for a son, or even for a grandson, but who ever heard of a great-grandson asking people to allow him to stand up for his great-grandfather? This peculiar duty seems to have devolved upon me. And so, ladies and gentlemen, I was in a quandary as I drove down here, to know what I might acceptably say.

Perhaps you can recall the statements, lately seen in the public press, that Matthew Thornton, the signer, was not really buried here; that during the dark days of the struggle for independence he turned royalist, and, like Benedict Arnold, received for his desertion the grant of a large tract of land within the limits of Canada; that he removed there with his family, died, and was buried there. The place of location was at St. Croix, and the statement was made that his descendants were still living at that place.

So serious a claim demanded serious attention; and when it came to the knowledge of another gentleman than myself, also interested in the subject, he investigated its truth. The result was so interesting to him that he carried his search for truth through the matter until he had exhausted it. And though we need no evidence that the man whose deeds and character we are lauding and commemorating to-day was no traitor, it may be interesting to us to know that a man of the same name was accused of treachery.

It appears that the signer had a relative, probably a nephew, whose name was Matthew Thornton, and who held a lieutenant's commission in Captain Osgood's company during the Revolutionary War. At the Battle of Bennington he was taken under arms inside the British lines. He was brought to Exeter, lodged in jail, court-martialled, dismissed from the Continental service, and tried for treason. His uncle, the signer, was one of the justices of the supreme court which was to try him, and, as was the custom, the initials of those justices who

sat on any criminal trial were written in the margin of the indictment. But on the margin of the indictment under which Lieutenant Thornton was tried his uncle's initials were not written, and we may suppose that the signer felt himself disqualified by reason of his relationship from acting as judge on his nephew's trial. The result was acquittal; but as the prisoner was in jail for two years, it may be imagined that at the end of his imprisonment he did not feel entirely well disposed to those who had kept him there. But it further appears that soon afterwards he removed to Canada, and was never seen here again.

So much for Matthew Thornton, the nephew. For Matthew Thornton, the patriot, it does not become me to speak his praise, and there is no need to. The work that he did speaks for itself. It needs no defence or explanation. Because of it, in part, you and I are here to-day, free and independent, self-governed and self-respecting, citizens of the best of the famous thirteen colonies.

And when we recall again, and from time to time, the memory of the sturdy, rugged, honest men who have gone forth to represent this good old Granite State in the past, justice demands that we number among them the name of Matthew Thornton. I thank you for the patience and courtesy with which you have heard me, and ask you to pardon the many shortcomings of my poor remarks for the sake of him who was once your fellow-townsmen.

HON. JOHN C. LINEHAN'S ADDRESS.

Ladies and Gentlemen: From the time I had arrived at the age of understanding, it has ever been my delight to read of the men whose deeds have reflected honor and renown on our good old state of New Hampshire.

The names of Sullivan, Langdon, Stark, Thornton, Whipple, and Bartlett, as well as many others of lesser fame, stand in the front rank among those identified with the establishment of the republic, and the prominence acquired for the state through their patriotic labors has been maintained from the time the name of Major John Sullivan headed the roll of delegates at the first Continental congress, in May, 1774, down to the present hour. For throughout the land the memories of none are more honored than those of Webster, Hale, Cass, Wade, Butler, Chase, Grimes, Dix, Pillsbury, Greeley, Pierce, and many others whose efforts in the cause of freedom, or from the exalted positions held by not a few of them, have made their names household words, and acquired new honors for their native state. With a recollection of all this, I was, therefore, pleased to receive the invitation to attend and participate in the exercises of the day, and add my tribute to that of others who have gathered from far and near to honor the memory of Matthew Thornton, one of the immortal signers, the Revolutionary patriot, and, as he was most truly styled by those who knew him in life, "the honest man."

And this pleasure was heightened by the knowl-

edge of the fact that, like myself, he was a native of Ireland, the birthplace of so many whose names are identified with the history of the state and nation. Judge then of my surprise to learn from the remarks of those who have preceded me, that although he was born in Ireland he was not an Irishman, but one of a race now known as Scotch-Irish, the creation, not of the Almighty, but of a new school of writers, who know more about the origin of their ancestors than *they* ever dreamt of. According to them, the race originated in Scotland: circumstances obliged many of them to settle in the north of Ireland, where they kept aloof from the native Irish, and from thence they came to America; and they were different from the Irish in blood, language, morals, and religion. Now, against this idea I desire to enter a most solemn protest; and I want to inform my Scotch-Irish friends upon this platform, and upon the floor, that I am stating a fact, not advancing a theory, when I say that the country first known to history as Scotia or Scotland, was Ireland, and the people first called Scots, the people of Ireland. My authority for this is not confined to writers of my own nationality; the testimony of others, English and Scotch, can be cited—Buckle, Green, Lecky, Knight, Chambers, Sir Henry Mayne, and many others—all of whom agree that the Scots of Ireland crossed over to Caledonia about the year 503, and after a long contest conquered the Picts and founded the modern kingdom of Scotland; and from them both country and people derive their name.

A glance at the history and geography of Ireland and Scotland will convince the most sceptical of the truth of this, for the surnames of the Highland clans, as well as the similarity of the names of places, confirm the relationship. So that the simple truth is this, that when the Scots from Argyle settled in the north of Ireland in 1620, they were but returning to the homes of their ancestors, the connection with which, despite the repeated efforts of English rulers to break it, had never been severed; for the people of both countries had married and intermarried from the most remote period, and for ages the language, customs, and religion had been the same. The fact that the blood had been mixed with that of the Saxons of the Lowlands, and the Scandinavians settled on the islands along the Scottish coast, does not make any difference, for precisely a similar condition of affairs existed in Ireland during the same period, the old Gaelic blood being thoroughly mixed with that of the Normans who came over with Strongbow, with the Saxons who came later, and with the Danes who had acquired possession of the east coast of Ireland before William the Conqueror had landed in England.

It is, therefore, not too much to say that to no single one of these races does the credit belong for furnishing the hardy pioneers of New Hampshire, but rather to the offspring of the English, Irish, Welsh, and Scotch, whose bloods were so largely mingled with the other races mentioned, is due the debt for the stock which has made New Hampshire famous for its eminent men during the past century,

and whose descendants have thus far furnished the best type of the representative American.

It is my good fortune to have been a resident of the state for forty-three years. Coming here when only nine years old, my associations through life, with books and with men, have been such that all my thoughts, impulses, and aspirations are thoroughly American. I am a Yankee from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. No native to the manner born feels prouder of his country and of the glorious achievements of his countrymen; but in this matter of race I have my own ideas, ideas founded on careful study and patient observation, aided largely by a fair knowledge of the Gaelic tongue, acquired from the lips of my good parents. And to express opinions thus formed, I am neither ashamed nor afraid. I believe the son who retains no affection for his mother can never truly love his wife, and a man who is ashamed of the land that gave him birth is unworthy of citizenship in the country which has adopted him.

As an American citizen of Irish birth, I know of no reason why I should remain silent when my native land is despoiled of the credit due it for furnishing to our good old state such a man as Matthew Thornton. Apply the same rule to Scotland, and you would rob her of some of the most glorious jewels in her crown. Test the United States in the same manner, and you would not have a corporal's guard of Americans left to guard the tomb of Washington. I am no lawyer, but when a boy I committed to memory the old adage, "Possession is nine points of the law," and as Matthew

Thornton was born in Ireland, you cannot rob him of his birthright.

As an Irishman we claim him, and I honestly believe, were he alive to-day, and able to express himself, he would confirm the title. Some of the best Irishmen that ever lived were, like him, of English stock; and regardless of what has been said here of his origin, the character of his name denotes Saxon and not Scottish blood. This much I say in justice to myself and to the memory of those men who are now styled Scotch-Irish, but who were in life as Irish as I am—your Sullivans, Mooneys, Butlers, Kellys, McNeils, McMurphys, McDuffys, Connors, Henrys, Connells, etc.—all identified with the history of New Hampshire, and all, with one exception, of old Gaelic or Scottish origin.

Whatever difference of opinion may exist now on this question, I am satisfied time will make right. I am glad to be here, and rejoice that I can unite with you in honoring the memory of a man who well deserves all that has been so eloquently said of him by our good governor, and by the gifted speaker of the day. The inscription on the stone at the head of this grave, “the honest man,” placed there by the direction of those who knew him in life, shows that he was a good as well as a great man.

The state has supplemented this with the beautiful monument before us; and it is not too much to say, that long after we are forgotten, the plain shaft of granite, so emblematic of his adopted state, marking the last resting-place of his ashes, will

tell the story of his life; and for what he has done for us and for the nation, may God bless the memory of Matthew Thornton!

ADDRESS BY REV. A. P. PUTNAM, D. D., OF
CONCORD, MASS.

Mr. President, and Ladies and Gentlemen: It is good to be here, and I am very glad I have come to be with you on this most interesting occasion. You do well to erect monuments to your great men, and surely no state in the Union, in proportion to its size and population, has had so many noted worthies as your own. It has been one of the delights of my life to have seen and heard not a few of them in years long gone—Daniel Webster, Salmon P. Chase, Joseph Bell, Levi Woodbury, George W. Nesmith, Amos P. Tuck, Nathaniel P. Rogers, glorious John P. Hale, and others, some of whom, at least, have been among the foremost statesmen and champions of freedom in the land. You have had so many of them that you have been generous to supply other parts of the country from your abundant store, and still have had enough, as you yet have, for your own need.

We of Massachussetts have been immensely your debtors, and the noble men you have sent us have shed so much lustre on the name of the old Bay State, that we beg to ask you to send us more of the same sort, and we will honor them as we have the rest. Send us your orator of the day! We are proud of them all, and whithersoever they go, they will surely, as in the past, carry with them,

for the welfare of the nation at large, the true principles of liberty and constitutional government which have been born and nurtured within them among your granite hills and mountains.

Wherever there is a new state to be founded or moulded, there you will find natives of New Hampshire to help do the work. Though many of your own farming districts may be on the wane, you have your compensation for the loss in the ever widening influence of your intelligent and patriotic sons and daughters.

I do not feel that I am entirely a stranger among you. If I here make new friends, I also find old ones. Why, here is your distinguished fellow-citizen, Hon. Joseph Kidder, of Manchester! I have been wanting to see him again ever since I went to school to him in my native town of Danvers, Mass., more than fifty years ago. He was one of the best teachers we ever had, and I am glad to see that the half century has dealt so kindly with him, and that, after all his long and useful life, he looks almost as young as he did when I first knew him, except, as with others of us, time has a little touched his hair with gray. And then, to say nothing of happy summer vacations which from time to time I have passed amid your mountain scenery, I am taken back to some of the '40s, when I was also at school at Pembroke, and sported on the banks and swam in the tide of the same old Merrimack that rolls on here at our feet to-day. Yes, I feel quite at home with you in these festal scenes, and rejoice with you in doing honor to the memory of Matthew Thornton. God

bless his descendants, and bless you all, with the gallant state which you so justly love and so faithfully serve.

Col. Frank G. Noyes, of Nashua, spoke as follows:

ADDRESS OF COL. FRANK G. NOYES.

Mr. President: I am heavily handicapped in attempting to speak here to-day, as will be apparent to every one who hears my voice—or rather the lack of a voice. This is the result of an affection of the vocal chords received by me as a legacy from the recent national encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic at the capital of our country.

But, sir, I cannot resist the desire to speak very briefly in response to your courteous invitation, and to say a few words on this memorable occasion. This desire is chiefly inspired by the fact that while justly due tributes have been paid here to the memory of that great New Hampshire patriot in whose honor this beautiful monument has been erected and dedicated by a grateful state, a very important feature has not received recognition or mention. That feature is significant of the fact that the same spirit of loyalty, devotion, and love of country that inspired Dr. Matthew Thornton was transmitted lineally, and evidenced during the late War of the Rebellion by men in whose veins flowed his blood, and who fought loyally for the integrity of the Federal Union.

Upon a *bas relief* in bronze on the soldiers' and

sailors' monument at Nashua is portrayed the naval engagement, June 19, 1864, between the United States sloop-of-war *Kearsarge* and the notorious and dreaded rebel cruiser *Alabama*. The *Alabama* is engulfed, sinking in the sea, while the victorious *Kearsarge* is seen in the background, on even keel, seemingly uninjured by the fight. Famous as is this battle throughout the world, it is especially memorable to us from the fact that the *Kearsarge* was named for one of the mountains of the old Granite State, and also because one of Merrimack's bravest sons was the executive officer of the victorious vessel in that conflict which dragged down the rebel flag and sent the arrogant corsair ship to the bottom of the Atlantic, off the coast of France. And that executive officer was Lieutenant-Commander James S. Thornton, a grandson of our Matthew Thornton. He died a captain in the United States navy in the year 1875, and lies buried near this spot.

Another lineal descendant and grandson of Matthew Thornton is present here to-day to participate in the ceremonies of dedicating this monument to his grandfather. I refer to Dr. James B. Greeley. He illustrated on many a battle-field, in defence of the flag of this country, during the bloody years from 1861 to 1865, that he, too, inherited the same spirit of patriotism, and his present bodily infirmities, which are the result of disease incurred while in the service of his country, remind us most pathetically that

“The paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

The president of the day called upon Hon. George A. Ramsdell, chairman of the committee of arrangements on the part of the state, to say a word in conclusion of the exercises. Mr. Ramsdell responded in substance as follows:

ADDRESS OF HON. GEORGE A. RAMSDELL.

Mr. President: I cheerfully respond to your invitation to say a word as these delightful exercises are drawing to a close. This day, the mellowest of the year, this landscape over-arched by the softness of autumnal skies, and this more than satisfied gathering, are enough to call out warm words of appreciation.

That we have had a most enjoyable day is due largely to the fact that the elements seem to be in sympathy with the occasion. We took large risk in having these dedicatory exercises so late in the season, but the day has been perfect. It has been a joy to be abroad and breathe the delicious air, and to come so near Mother Earth when everything is suggestive of absolute comfort and repose—and yet, to experienced eyes, not without a gentle intimation of the coming winter.

For the shelter of this tent, for the music of the band, for the eloquent oration, we are indebted to the state. But for the banquet at which we all lingered, for the care and labor which have been so freely bestowed in preparation for this long-to-be-remembered day upon the banks of the Merrimack, for that indefinable something and that indescribable everything, in an affair of this kind, which to-

day has made us feel satisfied with ourselves and all the world, we are indebted to the good men and women of this town.

As we survey this landscape of water, intervale, and hill, a single feature of which—this beautiful river—is enough to make a completed picture, we wonder not that Matthew Thornton selected this spot as a residence, and held it until his decease at a good old age. From all we know of him, and in particular from what we have to-day heard in the words of our eloquent orator and in the addresses by which his effort has been so well supplemented, we do not wonder that the influence of this good and able man remains and has so indelibly stamped itself upon this community.

We are a little late in erecting this monument, and yet the fact that at the end of a century, with no sect or party to prompt to action, the people of New Hampshire unitedly have said, Let us build a monument to Thornton, argues well for the good feeling, the lofty purpose, and unquestioned patriotism that to-day are found in the state he so much loved and honored.

The next best thing to being great is to be able to appreciate greatness. The intelligent and thoughtful admirer of a hero is himself something of a hero, or would be in a crisis. Am I outside the bounds of sober speech when I say that all our manly ideals are but ourselves, as we would be in our better moments and under our loftiest inspirations? I think not. Let no one despair of the republic so long as our citizens are building monuments and dedicating statues to the founders and preservers

of our national life, so long as integrity in private affairs and in public office is counted worthy of commemoration in bronze and stone.

The following letter from Senator Chandler, addressed to Councillor Ramsdell, was read in connection with the spoken tributes to the memory of Matthew Thornton:

LETTER OF HON. WILLIAM E. CHANDLER.

WATERLOO, N. H., Sept. 26, 1892.

Hon. George A. Ramsdell, of the Committee of the Governor's Council :

DEAR SIR: I very much regret that an engagement to be absent from the state on the 29th inst. will prevent me from being present at the dedication of the Thornton monument at Merrimaack.

This dedication must remind us of the many-sided characters and labors of the founders of our state. Matthew Thornton was a scholar, theologian, physician and surgeon, soldier, lawyer, judge, councillor, and legislator; yet history does not record that he was a failure in any work to which he laid his hand.

When he took the pen and in behalf of New Hampshire signed the immortal Declaration of Independence, no abler or worthier representative of the state lived on her soil.

When we commemorate such ancestors by monuments and orations, we best serve and teach the youth of the commonwealth. If they will study and imitate the lives of the founders of American liberty and the American constitution, the future of the nation will be safe in their control.

Very respectfully,

W. E. CHANDLER.



UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS



0 011 699 650 9

